

REFERENCE TITLE: *recreational shooting*

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# **SM 1006**

Introduced by  
Senators Bee, Arzberger, Burns, Verschoor (with permission of committee on  
Rules)

## A MEMORIAL

URGING THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT TO ACCOMMODATE RECREATIONAL SHOOTING IN  
THE IRONWOOD FOREST NATIONAL MONUMENT.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 To the Secretary of the United States Department of the Interior and the  
2 Director of the Bureau of Land Management:

3 Your memorialist respectfully represents:

4 Whereas, article II, section 26, Constitution of Arizona, recognizes  
5 the right of citizens to bear arms by stating that "the right of the  
6 individual citizen to bear arms in defense of himself for the State shall not  
7 be impaired." Likewise, the Second Amendment to the United States  
8 Constitution safeguards the "right of the people to keep and bear arms";  
9 and

10 Whereas, in order for the citizens of this State to exercise a  
11 meaningful constitutional right to arms guaranteed by their state and federal  
12 constitutions, they must have readily available venues to practice and hone  
13 their shooting skills, as they have since territorial days; and

14 Whereas, more than seventy per cent of all land in Arizona is now  
15 managed by either the federal government or tribal nations, with seventeen  
16 per cent directly controlled by the Bureau of Land Management (Bureau); and

17 Whereas, Bureau lands have traditionally been intended to accommodate  
18 multiple uses, including recreational shooting, plinking, hunting, hiking,  
19 biking, rock climbing, bird watching, off-road vehicle travel and camping,  
20 without jeopardizing the public safety; and

21 Whereas, hunters, who are essential to maintaining the strength of the  
22 State's economy and conservation efforts, currently use Bureau lands as areas  
23 to safely and responsibly sight-in their firearms and engage in the practice  
24 of their hunting skills, ensuring the safe and humane harvest of game  
25 animals; and

26 Whereas, formal shooting ranges do not replicate the experience of  
27 dispersed recreational shooting on public lands and are often too difficult  
28 and costly for average Arizonans to travel to on a regular basis; and

29 Whereas, the vast majority of recreational shooters respect the natural  
30 resources found on public lands and endeavor to leave public lands in the  
31 same condition as when they arrived; and

32 Whereas, the Bureau is proposing closure of the 128,000-acre Ironwood  
33 Forest National Monument northwest of Tucson to all recreational shooting as  
34 part of its preferred Alternative "C" for its draft Resource Management Plan  
35 because of safety concerns and damage to natural resources; and

36 Whereas, the Bureau signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 2006 with  
37 more than three dozen conservation and sportsmen advocacy organizations that  
38 guaranteed it would work cooperatively with these groups to jointly attempt  
39 to address perceived concerns regarding resource damage and public safety in  
40 a mutually satisfactory manner before proposing closure of Bureau lands to  
41 recreational shooting; and

42 Whereas, none of the groups that were signatories to the Memorandum of  
43 Understanding were informed of the announcement of the preferred Alternative  
44 "C"; and

1       Whereas, concerns regarding resource damage and safety can be addressed  
2 cooperatively between the Bureau and the nongovernmental signatories to the  
3 Memorandum through efforts such as public education campaigns and enhanced  
4 enforcement of existing laws and regulations; and

5       Whereas, the National Rifle Association of America volunteered its  
6 expertise to the Bureau on a number of occasions to help address concerns  
7 expressed by the Bureau as early as 2003, with no result; and

8       Whereas, the complete closure of all 128,000 acres of the Monument  
9 based on safety concerns is unacceptable when there are many safe  
10 recreational shooting locations in undeveloped areas that include three  
11 distinct mountain ranges, as is the case of the Monument; and

12     Whereas, the public's confidence in the final Resource Management Plan  
13 has been harmed by press accounts supported by the Bureau's Tucson field  
14 office and published weeks before the close of the public input process.  
15 Wherefore your memorialist, the Senate of the State of Arizona, prays:

16     1. That the Bureau revise the preferred Alternative "C" for the draft  
17 Resource Management Plan to accommodate the time-honored recreational  
18 shooting in the Monument that has been responsibly practiced by the majority  
19 of users in the multiple use framework customarily recognized by the Bureau.

20     2. That the Bureau honor its commitment, as set out in the Memorandum  
21 of Understanding, to work cooperatively with the conservation and sportsmen  
22 advocacy organizations party to the Memorandum to find mutually satisfactory  
23 solutions to issues associated with resource damage and public safety and  
24 incorporate these solutions in the revised Alternative "C".

25     3. That the Bureau release the revised Alternative "C" for a new round  
26 of public comment absent the bias displayed by the Bureau's Tucson field  
27 office.

28     4. That the Bureau revise its current practices in Arizona to avoid  
29 closing its other vast holdings throughout the state to recreational  
30 shooting.

31     5. That, as part of its revised practices, the Bureau commit to  
32 honoring the provisions of the signed Memorandum of Understanding.

33     6. That the Secretary of State of the State of Arizona transmit copies  
34 of this Memorial to the Secretary of the United States Department of the  
35 Interior, the Director of the Bureau of Land Management and the State  
36 Director of the Arizona Office of the Bureau of Land Management.